Better Equipments for Field Officers of CBEC for Coastal Patrolling

1014. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state the reasons for not taking measures to provide better equipments and machinery, like helicopters, speed boats, patrol crafts, wireless networking etc., to the field officers of CBEC, to undertake coastal patrolling etc. as is being done in advanced countries, where the Customs play a major role in combating narcotics and arms smuggling?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI V. DHANANJAY KUMAR): It is not correct to say that Government is not taking measures to provide better equipments and machinery, like helicopters, speed boats, patrol crafts, wireless networking, etc., to the field officers of CBEC, to undertake coastal patrolling etc. Keeping in view the changing trend of smuggling as well as the economic scenario, Government has been taking effective steps to equip the field formations under the CBEC with the latest state-of-the-art equipments and devices for prevention and detection of smuggling of contraband goods including narcotic drugs, explosives, arms and ammunitions, etc. At present, 105 nos. of Baggage X-Ray Machines, 1016 nos. of Hand Held Metal Detectors and 87 nos. of Door Frame Metal Detectors have been deployed at various field formations under the Customs Department such as International Airports, Inland Container Depots, Air Cargo Complexes, Land Customs Stations, Foreign Post Offices, etc. for detection of contraband goods and also for expeditious and speedy clearance of cargo & passengers. In addition, 4 nos. of Narcotics and Explosives Detectors (IDNSCAN Machines) have recently been depolyed at 4 major International Airports at Delhi, Mumbai, Calcutta & Chennai.

For effective surveillance, the field formations under the CBEC have also been provided with 642 nos. of Hand Held Search Lights, 406 nos. of Simple Binoculars and 517 nos. of Night Vision Binoculars. Besides, 121 nos.* of Patrol Crafts also have been deployed in the maritime Commissionerates for harbour-patrolling & effective surveillance at sea.

For providing better equipments and modernising the existing

communications set up with the various field formations under the CBEC, the old wireless sets/equipments are being replaced by state-of-the-art equipment. The existing communication network in Commissionerates of Ahmedabad, Bangalore, Mumbai, Pune, Cochin and West Bengal have been further beefed up by installing repeater stations, for longer range of VHF communications. Wireless network linking Bhubaneswar with Paradeep, Cuttack and Sambalpur has been provided to Bhubaneswar Commissionerate. VHF Stations have also been opened at these places for providing local communications within 15-20 kms. radius.

In addition to above, the coastal field formations under the CBEC have also been carrying out maritime and aerial surveillance in coordination with Coast Guard authorities.

The deployment of the anti-smuggling equipments in the field formations under the CBEC is reviewed by the Government from time to time, keeping in view the changing trend of smuggling and economic scenario.

Transfer of Narcotics Control Bureau

1015. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are considering to transfer the Narcotics Control Bureau from the Ministry of Finance to the Ministry of Home, if so, the reasons therefor;

(b) the reasons for the Bureau not being placed directly under the control of Customs and Central Excise, as was, the case upto early 1990; and

(c) the details of the seizures of narcotics, variety-wise, by different enforcement agencies, during the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI V. DHANANJAY KUMAR): (a) Sir, No such proposal is under consideration.

(b) In 1990, Narcotics Control Bureau was placed under the supervision and control of Secretary (Revenue) for effective and